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SOVIET POLITICAL OBJECTIVES IN THE FEDERAL
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AND ASSESSMENTS

by

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Soviet Political Objectives in the Federal Republic
of Germany: Instruments and Assessments

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines apparent Soviet attempts to use its detente policy to exploit the Federal Republic of Germany's membership in NATO, and thereby expand its influence in the FRG and Europe as a whole. It is hypothesized that the Soviet Union chooses to exploit the FRG's position in NATO by cultivating a special relationship with it, and thereby accessing the U.S. and NATO as a whole, rather than making overt efforts to force a near-term split between West Germany and the U.S. The thesis focuses on the instruments the Soviet Union uses to maximize its influence in the FRG and the region. These instruments include West Germany's concerns regarding nuclear war in Europe, Ostpolitik and German-German relations.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Soviet Union aims to greatly expand its influence in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and in Western Europe as a whole. At the same time, it seeks to reduce U.S. influence in the area. The ultimate goal is to maximize both these trends and produce Soviet hegemony over all of Europe. The Kremlin would prefer to accomplish this task without armed conflict, providing the minimum risk of failure and the minimum cost.

To attain its goals in Western Europe and the FRG the Kremlin has employed strategies of confrontation and cooperation, often simultaneously. In certain periods it has emphasized one approach more than the other. Since the late 1950's the Soviet Union has relied on a policy of "peaceful coexistence" and rapprochement with the West to further its goals in Europe. Peaceful coexistence, which was introduced by Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, is a means for Moscow to ostensibly renounce the use of force in international disputes while still justifying it to support the class struggle for socialist revolution. This policy of detente has produced an atmosphere of reduced East-West tensions. This in turn has fostered disunity and self-restraint in the Atlantic Alliance regarding Western security measures. It has also

cast the Soviet Union in a more favorable light making it appear less aggressive and dangerous to its neighbors. Ultimately, these developments have allowed the Kremlin to make significant progress in weakening U.S. influence in Western Europe and strengthening its own.

Through its policy of detente the Soviet Union seeks to exploit and, at the same time, transform the status quo of a Europe divided between two opposing power blocs. The Soviet Union attempts to use its relationship with one member of the Western Alliance (the Federal Republic) to influence the policies of another (the United States). This strategy can be implemented most effectively in an atmosphere of detente. Reduced East-West tensions and the specter of a less threatening Eastern foe also allow the Soviet Union to continue its efforts to achieve a wide margin of military superiority while drawing less attention to this development and less action from the West to counter it. If carried to the extreme these trends could cause the Alliance to evolve into a politically fragmented, militarily inferior organization, and allow the Soviet Union to dominate Western Europe.

The Soviet Union uses the close ties it has developed with the FRG as a result of detente to further its goals in Western Europe. As the most powerful non-nuclear West European nation and a member of NATO, West Germany is firmly anchored to the West. As the Western half of a land divided

between opposing Eastern and Western power blocs it is emotionally torn and divided. Pulled between its security needs from the West and its interests in political and economic ties with the East, the FRG is a perfect target of Soviet influence. The Kremlin uses its influence in the FRG to affect U.S. and NATO policies and the overall strength of the Alliance.

This thesis examines apparent Soviet attempts to use detente to exploit the FRG's membership in NATO. The FRG's interest in secure political and economic relations with East Germany and the Warsaw Pact provide the Soviet Union with a lever of influence--i.e., to push the FRG to pressure the U.S. into economic and defense policies more favorable to the Soviet Union. Even if the U.S. fails to react in the desired fashion, the policy may still succeed by causing conflict and disunity in the Alliance.¹ In the same way, the Soviet Union can apply pressure to the U.S. and NATO for arms reduction or "military detente."² Supporting military detente or a slowing of the East-West arms race as a result of reduced tensions allows Moscow to work toward reducing Western arsenals while building up its own behind the smokescreen of "detente." This process can be assisted by

¹Pierre Hassner, "Moscow and the Western Alliance," Problems of Communism (May-June 1981), p. 52.

²Peking Review, 1 January 1976, No. 2, p. 18, cited in A Lexicon of Marxist-Leninist Semantics, ed. Raymond S. Sleeper (Alexandria, Virginia: Western Goals, 1983), p. 85.

East-West arms negotiations which often result in an improved military posture for the Warsaw Pact. Achieving an uncontested military superiority over the West would allow the Soviets to intimidate or blackmail members of the Alliance when cooperation fails and coercion becomes necessary.

This thesis explores the hypothesis that the Soviet Union chooses to exploit the FRG's position in NATO by cultivating a special relationship with West Germany rather than making overt efforts to force a split between it and the U.S. It appears that the Kremlin prefers to use its detente approach with the FRG to gradually produce a weak, easily dominated Western Europe over a more confrontational strategy which might abruptly break up the NATO Alliance or cause the West to agree on a program of effective political-military countermeasures. An abrupt end to NATO could produce a more unified Western Europe or destabilize Eastern Europe, both highly undesirable results in Moscow's view.

This thesis focuses on the instruments the Soviet Union uses to maximize its influence in the FRG to attain its foreign policy objectives in the region. Chapter II reviews the history of Russo-German conflict and coexistence and closely examines current Soviet objectives in Western Europe and in the FRG plus Soviet peacetime strategies for attaining them. Chapter III expounds on the specific items

of national interest that make West Germany vulnerable to Soviet influence, and how the Kremlin attempts to use these as instruments to further its goals in the FRG and Western Europe. In Chapter IV the effectiveness of Soviet policies in the FRG is analyzed; specific political successes and failures are examined. Future prospects are also discussed in this section, including hypothetical long term outcomes to present strategies and those that might result from more aggressive "wedge-driving" tactics. The last chapter summarizes the paper's arguments and conclusions.

A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND³

The historical relationship between Russia and Germany has been one of alternating enmity and cooperation. Each has a traditional fear of (and contempt for) the other, mixed with respect for its cultural, scientific and even military achievements. A brief look at the progression of the love-hate relationship between Russia and Germany through the modern period will be useful in gaining a clearer perspective on the current relationship between the two states.

Until its unification in 1871, what was called Germany was actually a conglomeration of many separate sovereignties (over 300 before the French Revolution and 38 after the

³Much of the historical information and interpretation in this section is taken from Walter Laqueur's Russia and Germany: A Century of Conflict (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), pp.

Congress of Vienna in 1815). There was also the German kingdom of Prussia and the German parts of the Austrian Empire. At the Congress of Vienna all these states were brought together to form the Germanic Confederation under the permanent presidency of Austria. After drawing Austria into the Seven Weeks War of 1866 and France into the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and defeating them both, Prussia (through the efforts of Minister President Bismarck and King William I) succeeded in usurping Austrian control over the various German states, and unified them, with Prussia, into one independent nation.

The nineteenth century is marked by a prevailing Russo-German friendship. Communication and cooperation was facilitated by ideological homogeneity, the frequent familial ties between both monarchs and nobility, a common language (German or French) and the fact that many Russian statesmen were actually Germans (there were too few educated Russians to fill all the posts and many Russian aristocrats viewed state service as demeaning).⁴ The inclination toward close Russo-German collaboration in this period had its beginnings in the Napoleonic Wars. After the French defeat of Prussia, German and Prussian armies were enlisted by Napoleon to attack Russia. Soon after the attack began the Prussian commander General Yorck deserted the French with

⁴Walter Laqueur, Russia and Germany: A Century of Conflict (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), p. 16.

his troops and joined the armies of the tsar in a German campaign. This move culminated in a treaty of neutrality between Prussia and Russia (the Convention of Tauroggen in December 1812), and their cooperative liberation of Prussia and Germany.

The spirit of Tauroggen continued through the Bismarckian era with the formation of the Three Emperors' League (Germany, Russia and Austria) in 1871 and the signing of the Russo-German Reinsurance Treaty in 1887. Indeed, many historians believe that if William II had not allowed the Russo-German treaty to lapse in 1890, the chain of events which led to Germany's subsequent political isolation and even the outbreak of the first world war might have been averted. During World War I Germany had all but defeated Russia when the new Bolshevik regime chose to sign a separate peace treaty with Germany at Brest Litovsk in December 1917 (in an effort to safeguard the regime), and paid for the treaty by relinquishing control of Poland, Lithuania, the Ukraine and Baltic states as well as Finland and Transcaucasia.

Four years after the war was ended Germany and Russia formed a new alliance at Rapallo. This rapprochement was the result of the international pariah status of both nations. Germany was given sole responsibility for the outbreak and destruction of the war and Russia was spurned because of her new totalitarian regime under the Bolsheviks.

As a result of their desperate economic and political situation, both states signed the Treaty of Rapallo in 1922 and initiated normal diplomatic and commercial relations. The Germans, like other Europeans, were distrustful of Bolshevism, but found the Russian contacts extremely beneficial for commercial trade and particularly for the military collaboration which helped both sides to bypass the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. The treaty also allowed both states to finally emerge from diplomatic isolation as they supplemented the agreement with a treaty of friendship and neutrality (that technically held until Hitler's invasion in 1939).

The cooperative period in Russo-German relations was interrupted by the rise of National Socialism in Germany in the early 1930s. Hitler was bent on expanding to the east and was fervently anti-communist as well. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August 1939 does not appear to have been a genuine attempt at alliance. It was Hitler's attempt to forestall intervention from Russia in his imminent attack on Poland and Stalin's attempt to attain a sphere of interest in Poland and gain assurance against a future German attack on Russia. As history shows, Stalin was sadly disappointed.

During World War II the Soviets were almost defeated by the Germans in the early stages of the Barbarossa campaign. However, the Soviets recovered and successfully repelled the

Germans, and in the end, marched into Berlin (and remain there to this day).

As it became obvious that the concessions made to the Soviets at Tehran and Yalta served only to facilitate a permanent Soviet expansion into Eastern Europe and East Germany, an even deeper enmity (now ideological) than that occasioned by World War II became entrenched between East and West, and manifested as the Cold War. Soviet communism, through its expansionist, messianic goals and overt hostility to Western democracy and capitalism (for which West Germany now has a tradition), will continue to be the source of deep conflict between the Eastern and Western power blocs and so between West Germany and the Soviet Union.

In the years of detente this conflict has gone underground as efforts at rapprochement flourish. Yet, this rapprochement differs from that of the past, for it is closely monitored by a western superpower (the U.S.) on which the FRG depends for its security. For a West Germany weary of the estrangement between the two halves of Germany and Europe, detente is an effort to make Europe's division bearable and perhaps evolutionary. For the Soviet Union it is a way to continue its war against capitalism "by other means" (other than hot or cold war). To the Soviets the exploitation of the Federal Republic of Germany's political and physical vulnerabilities is an excellent "means" to

attain its foreign policy goals in the region. These goals will be the next point of discussion.

II. SOVIET OBJECTIVES

A. MEDIUM-LONG TERM GOALS IN EUROPE

The Soviet Union hopes to displace American influence and power in Western Europe while ensuring that it is not replaced with greater West European political or military unity. The Kremlin would like to see Western Europe distance itself from the United States as detente-inspired arms control diminishes the credibility (i.e., the likely operational effectiveness) of the U.S. security guarantee. The Soviets also hope that the closer East-West ties of detente will help make Western Europe more economically dependent on the East while convincing West Europeans to lower their guard militarily as a result of reduced tensions. The desired result would be a fragmented Western Europe sufficiently intimidated by Soviet military might and the threat of economic sanctions to accept Soviet hegemony. The Soviets could preside over a very lopsided, but still bipolar Europe or proceed a step further, and head a pan-European security system. Both goals are consistent with Soviet aims to weaken Atlantic cohesion while precluding its replacement with increased West European

solidarity and eventually gaining maximum control over European security.⁵

B. SOVIET STRATEGY IN PEACETIME

Before discussing Soviet objectives further, some of the components of Soviet peacetime strategy for political change should be briefly outlined. Soviet internal security requirements, Soviet concerns with expediency and low risk and the role of Soviet military power will be emphasized.

1. Internal Security

The Kremlin has as a primary concern in its peacetime strategy to maintain its internal security, particularly in the USSR proper and its East European sphere of influence. In working toward its long term goal of hegemony over Europe the Kremlin hopes to replace Atlanticism with a form of Europeanism. That is, Moscow would like to replace West German (and West European) bonds to the U.S. with a pan-European system led by the Soviet Union. A Western Europe independent of the U.S. must, however, not be too independent or strong. A cohesive Western Europe not only provides a new, perhaps even stronger challenge to Soviet control, but a possible magnet to East European political aspirations.

Conversely, a Western Europe abruptly severed from its Atlantic sponsor could become immediately disunited and

⁵Laqueur, Russian and Germany: A Century of Conflict, p. 16.

weak, thereby also providing a risk to the East's internal security by reducing the perceived threat from the West. Stability in the Warsaw Pact relies heavily on the image of a dangerous external threat. The Soviet leadership must prevent the idea of a relaxation in tensions with the "aggressive Capitalist West" from leading the East European and Soviet publics to question their totalitarian regimes. This would be much more difficult if Western Europe were suddenly fragmented and floundering.

The Soviets view the middle ground between a cohesive Atlantic Alliance and a unified Europe as very narrow and precarious. They fear that if the former were to fall apart the latter could rapidly form.⁶ This is why they choose to widen this middle ground by exploiting the Alliance, and attempting to transform it gradually into a weaker organization rather than working to drive a permanent wedge between Western Europe and the United States (and specifically between West Germany and the U.S.) to break up NATO altogether.

2. Pragmatism and Low Risk

The past 70 years have demonstrated that Soviet leaders are extremely cautious and expedient. Moscow has displayed great consistency in its efforts to "divide and

⁶Robert Legvold, "The Soviet Union and Western Europe," The Soviet Empire: Expansion and Detente, ed. William E. Griffith (Toronto and Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath & Co., 1976), p. 228.

conquer" in order to pursue its hegemonic objectives, but there appears to be much flexibility in the Kremlin's tactical approach. The leadership uses whatever tactics seem to be appropriate to manipulate situations as they arise. Moscow's actions are not entirely ad hoc, however. There are certain "programs," such as detente and arms control, which provide the basic framework for Soviet strategy. Using these programs as a guide the Kremlin seeks to react to events or decisions occurring in the Atlantic Alliance, or elsewhere, over which it has little control.⁷

The Kremlin has discovered that this opportunism lends itself to working with the governments in power in Western Europe. It no longer seeks to rely on fomenting communist revolution in the West in order to bring about a change in the political order. In Western Europe and West Germany particularly, it is much more practical politically to conduct foreign policy with the parties in power since the Communist parties are mostly small, weak and/or Eurocommunitic (that is, they oppose Soviet domination of world communism and Soviet internal repression of democracy and civil rights as well as territorial expansion).

The expediency principle implies that the Soviets will use any tactic that might bring the desired result in

⁷Angela E. Stent, "Western Europe and the USSR," Areas of Challenge for Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1980s, by Gerrit W. Gong, Angela E. Stent, and Rebecca V. Strode (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 8.

the situation which has presented itself. In other words, the Kremlin will use offensive and defensive tactics; it will attempt to seduce or to isolate, and often use opposing tactics at once. This means that although Soviet strategy toward Western Europe is best served by operating in the status quo of the NATO Alliance and a wider detente the Kremlin will also employ "wedge-driving" tactics (between America and Western Europe) to cause disunity and instability in the Atlantic Alliance.

The best example of the Soviets using various tactics simultaneously is the massive Soviet campaign of 1982-83 to stop the U.S. deployment of INF (Intermediate range Nuclear Force) missiles in Western Europe by pressuring the West Europeans (particularly the West Germans) not to accept them. The West Germans were promised increased concessions on inter-German contacts and were also threatened with a complete bar to further progress in German-German relations. The Soviets also played on tensions within NATO by advising the West Germans to beware of the U.S. plans to wage a limited nuclear war in Central Europe with the new weapons (perhaps even U.S. plans to use European-based nuclear weapons in a first strike); they were consequently urged by the Soviets to counteract their principal ally's dangerous confrontational tendencies.

The Soviet leadership has historically been very cautious in its efforts to expand its influence. Many

Sovietologists attribute this to Russian political culture. Theoretically, the Soviets operate from a position of low risk to reduce to a minimum the chances of failure and the chance of forfeiting previous gains. This tendency to be extremely cautious naturally promotes the use of peaceful means to gain Soviet objectives and to be patient in attaining them. Another reason the Soviets see no need to hasten developments is that the Marxist-Leninist dialectic ensures that the powerful forces of history will continue to operate in their favor to bring about global socialism.

3. Military Power

From the time of its inception the Soviet state has suffered from a political inferiority complex. As a result, the Soviet leadership has long sought a stronger world image and the global political power that attends the achievement of great power and superpower status. It attempted to reach this goal by gaining positive recognition for its system of government through the creation of a powerful industrialized economy and a strong military. However, its totalitarian regime continues to experience rejection in the West, and it has consistently failed to achieve political or economic legitimacy among its populace (at a minimum the system has lost mass appeal). Therefore, it has had to rely almost solely on its tremendous military strength and the sheer size of its empire to lay claim to the superpower status and power it so desperately desires.

In the late 1950's, when the Soviets first achieved the capability to produce ICBMs and the West perceived a much greater military/nuclear threat from the East, Soviet party chief Nikita Khrushchev was eager to try to translate this development into political power. He staged the 1958 Berlin Crisis, attempting to force the West into an agreement which would formally recognize the separation of the two Germanys, end Western occupation rights in West Berlin and preclude the acquisition of nuclear weapons by the FRG. Khrushchev threatened to hand control over access to West Berlin to East Germany if a settlement was not reached and to "rain missiles" on any power that might attack East Germany as a result of these changes. In the late 1960's Brezhnev quickly put the new Soviet strategic parity with the U.S. to good political use by consolidating Soviet power in East Europe and then embarking on his new detente and arms control policies from a position of equal superpower status.

From the Soviet Union's point of view, its preponderant military power provides it with the best possible warfighting capability, but more important, this military power provides a decided advantage for winning the peacetime political struggle for increased global influence. Having achieved strategic parity (and, many believe, superiority) and consequently, a degree of political parity with the US plus international recognition as an equal

superpower, the Soviet Union can wield the appropriate political power in Western Europe and specifically, in West Germany. Moscow's nuclear and conventional forces serve to overshadow US military power in the region and thereby call American security guarantees to Western Europe into question.

C. SHORT TERM GOALS IN EUROPE

In progressing toward its long term goal of European hegemony the Soviet Union pursues the following near-term objectives in Western Europe:

1. Protecting its World War II territorial gains from internal or external challenge.
2. Gradually lessening the American military, economic, political and cultural presence in Western Europe.
3. Obtaining a voice in the defense policies of West European countries and seeking to deny them defense options.
4. Securing economic and technological inputs for the Soviet economy.
5. Obtaining leverage over the internal politics and policies of West European countries, particularly on matters that affect Soviet interests.
6. Hindering progress toward West European political unity under European Community (EC) or other auspices.⁸

The Soviet Union approaches these goals through its detente policies from a position of military superiority. This strategy allows the Soviets to improve political and

⁸John Van Oudenaren, Soviet Policy Toward Western Europe: Objectives, Instruments, Results (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1986), p. 4.

economic ties with the West while discouraging political or military unity. Military superiority allows Moscow to keep a tight rein on Eastern Europe while convincing the West Europeans that the Kremlin deserves a voice in Western security and defense matters, and that there exists a real need for arms control.

The two policies (detente and military superiority) complement one another. According to Pierre Hassner, a recognized expert on Soviet-European relations, without detente Soviet military superiority can encourage Atlantic unity or European unity if the Atlantic connection is viewed as unreliable. Conversely, detente, in the absence of Soviet military superiority could raise East European expectations as a result of increased Western contacts, and hence cause instability in the area. Moscow's vocal campaign for "military detente" shows that it understands the potential for maximizing Soviet interests by using the two policies together.⁹

1. Detente: Bilateralism

The main thrust of Soviet detente policy has been to form bilateral relations and agreements with the countries of Western Europe. This policy has served to further several Soviet goals. In the economic arena it has allowed the Soviet Union to get the trade, credit and technical transfers it so desperately required when it first chose a

⁹Hassner, "Moscow and the Western Alliance," p. 47.

path of rapprochement with the West. But at the same time, the Kremlin can undermine West European political and economic unity by making bilateral agreements and refusing to deal with West European organizations such as the European Community (EC). Additionally, the long term trade agreements (some for 25 years) serve to build confidence among West Europeans in the Soviet Union's peaceful intentions. This perception of a reduced threat may help to persuade West Europeans to build down militarily or at least be less concerned over the Soviet military build-up.

Politically, the many bilateral and multilateral agreements and treaties signed with West European nations in the early detente years represented the fulfillment of Soviet goals in themselves. From the Soviet-West German Treaty of 1970 to the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in 1975 the agreements served to gain formal recognition of and security for Eastern Europe. Indeed, the Soviets have actively continued to try to gain a droit de regard over West European defense policies by limiting their options through formal negotiations and treaties.

2. Military Power: Arms Control

The important role preponderant military power plays in gaining and legitimizing political status and power for the Soviet Union has been described above. When combined

with the detente policies of political/economic bilateralism and arms control these purposes become clearer.

As mentioned above, the Soviet Union hopes to gradually gain a droit de regard or a legal and political basis for objecting to future West European defense initiatives. Through its clear military might the Soviet Union has helped motivate the West Europeans to pursue arms control negotiations. The added incentive has been the Soviet threat to abrogate many detente-inspired agreements which West Europeans cherish. These are agreements which West Europeans prize for their high economic, political and security value.

In this way the Soviets can press West Europeans to be party to arms control agreements which may reduce their own security. At the same time the Kremlin is given the opportunity to reduce the credibility of the U.S. nuclear and overall security guarantee to Western Europe by pressuring it to reduce the level of arms in Central Europe. This is clearly what occurred with the SALT I and II treaties. These agreements codified Soviet superiority in numbers of strategic launchers while leaving the West Europeans exposed to vast new deployments of Soviet theater nuclear forces, a class of weapons not limited in the treaties. However, the West Europeans (and particularly the West Germans) were keen on the U.S. signing and ratifying the treaties since their failure might have resulted in the

destruction of all the highly valued economic and political gains of detente and plunge the West into another Cold War.

D. OBJECTIVES IN THE FRG

As the most powerful and yet the most vulnerable of West European nations the FRG is the focus and pivot of Soviet strategy in the region. (The Federal Republic's political and physical vulnerabilities are reviewed in Chapter III.) In addition to the six policy objectives for Western Europe mentioned above, the Kremlin has a seventh in West Germany. That aim is to use its leverage in West Germany to affect the policies of NATO and the United States. West Germany is the key to Soviet influence on the U.S. and NATO because the Federal Republic has the most to gain and the most to lose in its relationship with the USSR. Torn between its strong fears and needs vis a vis the Soviet Union on the one hand, and its powerful position in NATO on the other, the FRG is the best possible Soviet instrument of influence on Washington and in NATO Europe.

The Soviet Union's power to fulfil West Germany's security, trade and contact requirements with East Germany and the Warsaw Pact nations is the source of its tremendous leverage. The Kremlin has sought to use its detente policies of bilateralism in economic and political agreements as well as arms control to make the FRG more dependent on the USSR economically and politically and less closely linked with the U.S., especially in defense matters.

As a result of West Germany's great economic and military strength and the Soviet Union's past history with it the Kremlin is particularly interested in using its influence to deny the FRG various defense options. The next chapter examines more closely how the Soviet Union takes advantage of West German interest in East-West ties to further its goals in the FRG and NATO as a whole.

III. SOVIET INSTRUMENTS OF INFLUENCE IN THE FRG

West Germany's exposed geographic position and the Soviet Union's veto power over the progress of East-West trade and contacts are the basis for the FRG's great vulnerability to Soviet political influence. West German security concerns to the East and strong interests in normalizing East-West relations make the FRG highly susceptible to Soviet pressures. Soviet manipulation of these interests allows the Kremlin to increase its influence in the region and work toward its objective of reducing NATO's security. These West German interests (which amount to openings to Soviet influence) can be separated into the two categories of physical and political vulnerabilities. The physical vulnerabilities result from West Germany's geostrategic position and deal with the FRG's interest in its own and in West Berlin's security from Eastern attack. The political vulnerabilities are the FRG's interests in normalizing relations with East Germany and Eastern Europe. Another political vulnerability is the Federal Republic's sensitivity regarding Germany's role in World War II.

A. PHYSICAL VULNERABILITIES

1. Invasion Angst

In German the word Angst means anxiety or fear. The West German fear of invasion from the East is a result of

its geostrategic position, its history of war with the East and its awareness of the ever larger specter of Soviet military might. The FRG also contains many high-value industrial and military targets and is heavily dependent on allies for its defense. As the easternmost NATO nation in Central Europe the FRG has Soviet troops stationed on its border. The proximity to vast Soviet military might makes the FRG especially sensitive to the possibility of becoming the target of a nuclear attack or the battlefield of a conventional war. Having several times experienced the advance of Russian soldiers onto German territory and the massive destruction associated with two world wars the people of West Germany have developed strong fears of future conflict on German soil.

The Soviet Union attempts to exploit these fears to gain influence in Western security policy. This was evident in Soviet efforts to pressure the FRG (and through the FRG, the United States) into not carrying out the initial INF deployments in 1983. The West Germans were threatened with becoming the target of new Soviet countermissiles to be placed in Eastern Europe.¹⁰ The Soviets also alluded to alleged U.S. plans to use the new weapons to launch the first strike of a limited nuclear war, urging the West Germans to counteract dangerous U.S. confrontational

¹⁰Roland Smith, Soviet Policy Towards West Germany, Adelphi Paper No. 203 (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1985), p. 2.

tendencies. Such tactics were not only aimed at promoting nuclear anxieties, but also at creating intra-NATO tensions. Such statements may have also increased Soviet influence by making some West Germans feel that they should take action to prove NATO's peaceful intentions.

Although the Soviets were unsuccessful in stopping the missile deployment, their tactics helped to mobilize an enormous sector of the West German public to demonstrate against the deployment. The anti-INF campaign in West Germany was locally instigated, but was heavily infiltrated by Soviet-backed German communists (DKP) and organized by front organizations such as the World Peace Council (WPC).¹¹ With the (Soviet-backed) communist leadership the regional campaign (with non-communist aims) was exploited to further Soviet propaganda goals and spread fear among the German populace of a nuclear war being fought on their territory.

As a result of its nuclear and invasion angst the FRG has a strong interest in maintaining and improving its security from the East. The main source of West German security is the U.S. nuclear guarantee. The FRG also seeks to improve its security by reducing East-West tensions and promoting arms control. Bonn views arms control as a means for redressing the East-West military imbalance (without new weapons deployments) while reducing the overall numbers of

¹¹J.A. Emerson Vermaat, "Moscow Fronts and the European Peace Movement," Problems of Communism, Vol. 31, No. 6 (November-December, 1982), p. 46.

weapons (particularly nuclear ones) in Central Europe. After experiencing the massive public opposition to the INF deployments in 1983, the FRG feels that additional NATO missile deployments in response to Soviet military growth would be politically very difficult (or impossible, according to some FRG officials). In reducing East-West tensions through arms control (particularly between the superpowers), Bonn hopes to promote its Ostpolitik goals of increased normalization between the FRG and Eastern Europe. Many West Germans fear that continued Western counter-armament in the absence of arms control negotiations would make the West appear more provocative to the Soviet Union, perhaps cause a renewed arms race and plunge both sides into a deep Cold War.

The West German interest in arms reductions can readily be exploited by the Soviet Union, which chooses to use arms control negotiations to reduce Western security and improve its own military posture in Western Europe. The Kremlin attempts to use arms reductions to reduce Western security by degrading the credibility of the U.S. nuclear guarantee, encouraging Western self-restraint in defense investments and denying Western Europe fallback positions regarding its defense.¹²

¹²Davis S. Yost, "Soviet Arms in Europe," Society, Vol. 24, No. 5 (July-August 1987), p. 73.

The U.S. nuclear guarantee is the FRG's (and Western Europe's) primary deterrent to Soviet aggression. It is the cement that binds together the Atlantic Alliance. The Soviet Union seeks to weaken the credibility of the guarantee (and thereby the Alliance) by entering into arms control agreements which have asymmetrical effects and consequently promote a more advantageous military posture for the Soviet Union.

The SALT I and II agreements are examples of this. The treaties codified Soviet superiority in numbers of ICBM launchers, a superiority aggravated further by larger Soviet missile throw-weights and greater Soviet investments in hardening and other passive defenses. The relaxation of tension attendant to the arms control environment caused the U.S. to fail to harden its own ICBM arsenals to a comparable degree or to invest in mobility or other survivability measures. Active defense of the U.S. ICBM force was ruled out by the ABM Treaty. The resulting U.S. ICBM vulnerability served to reduce the credibility of the U.S. nuclear guarantee to Western Europe.¹³

It can also be argued that, by focusing on strategic arms limitation during this period, the U.S. further degraded its security guarantee to Western Europe by failing to seek limitation of theater nuclear weapons causing unrestrained Soviet increases in this class of weapons in

¹³Yost, "Soviet Arms in Europe," p. 73.

Europe. This situation helped to prompt the NATO dual-track decision of 1979 which resulted in the 1983 INF deployment.

The strong Western desire to reach an agreement once negotiations are entered into usually results in the codification of continued Soviet superiority in the class of arms being discussed. As a result of the agreement to remove LRINF (Long Range INF) and SRINF (Short Range INF) forces from Europe, the credibility of the U.S. nuclear guarantee will be degraded still further (at least in some critical sectors of West European opinion) as highly visible, politically significant U.S. forces will be withdrawn from the theater. At the same time the Soviets will retain a huge superiority in numbers of short range mobile missile launchers in theater (such as SS-21s). Additionally, such an agreement might mean the beginning of the de-nuclearization of Western Europe (an explicit Soviet objective), which would eliminate the nuclear guarantee to Western Europe almost entirely. Western Europe's confidence in U.S. "coupling" could be degraded, and Western Europe would still be left open to vastly superior Soviet conventional forces and Soviet nuclear and chemical attack systems based in Eastern Europe.

The Kremlin also seeks to exploit West German interests in arms control to deny it certain defense fallback positions. The Soviet Union has directed its efforts primarily at keeping the FRG from acquiring a

nuclear deterrent or controlling NATO nuclear weapons. This was one of the principal motivations--and perhaps even the main motive--behind Soviet efforts in the 1960's to produce a nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). West German and NATO desires to keep the FRG non-nuclear were the main impetus in the West behind the FRG's becoming a signatory to the NPT, which bars it from producing nuclear weapons. The USSR has only the power to report a suspected treaty violation to the International Atomic Energy Agency. (The FRG can withdraw from the agreement with three months notice).¹⁴

Another method used to gain a level of Soviet control over future West German access to nuclear weapons is the Kremlin's effort to create a nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ) in Central Europe. Moscow has also sought to gain pledges of no-first-use of nuclear weapons from NATO nuclear states. The present CDU/CSU-FDP (Christian Democratic Union/Christian Socialist Union-Free Democratic Party) government has been unwilling to encourage the formulation of such pledges by the FRG's nuclear allies because they would fundamentally compromise the U.S. nuclear guarantee. The SPD, however, has completed a draft of such an agreement with the SED (Socialist Unity Party of the GDR).

Because of Germany's almost complete destruction in World War II, the FRG has an understandable interest in peace. When one also considers the FRG's desires to reduce

¹⁴Yost, "Soviet Arms in Europe," p. 77.

East-West tensions to pursue its Ostpolitik, it is easy to see how the Soviet peace campaign slogans decrying nuclear weapons as inherently evil might fall on receptive ears. By exploiting the West German public's fears of nuclear war the Soviets have made strides in reducing West German and West European security. Through its propaganda and peace campaigning the Kremlin has produced pressures to continue to achieve arms control agreements that are asymmetrical in their effects and that favor continued Soviet military superiority. Additionally, the heightened public awareness and awakened public opposition that resulted from the peace campaigns of the 1970's and 1980's have made it virtually impossible for the FRG to significantly increase defense investments. The Soviet peace rhetoric has also helped reduce the West German perception of the Soviet threat and consequently helped produce the lack of a perceived political necessity to spend more on defense. This development along with current economic constraints (as well as the model of lower growth rates in the U.S. defense budget) has resulted in stagnant FRG defense spending.

2. Berlin

West Germany continues to have a strong interest in maintaining close ties with West Berlin and in assuring its security. Owing to the highly exposed position of West Berlin and the Soviet Union's role as one of the four powers governing the divided city, West Germany is highly

dependent on Moscow to frustrate or further these important interests. As a result of Four Power rule neither the FRG nor the GDR have any legal control over Berlin (although the GDR regularly contests this and the USSR will agree when it is convenient). Hence, West Berlin is an obvious vulnerability for the FRG and so a political asset and instrument of influence for the Soviet Union.

The Kremlin has historically used Western access to Berlin and the city's status as both carrot and stick in urging Bonn to do its bidding. The two Berlin Crises were both attempts to use access to West Berlin as a negative incentive to keep West Germany from rearming and becoming a nuclear power.

In the Spring of 1948 when the three Western zones of occupied Germany united and adopted a currency reform, it became obvious that a new independent German state was about to be formed, and that its rearmament could soon follow. In an effort to halt this sequence of events the Soviet Union responded with the blockade of West Berlin. The subsequent U.S. airlift foiled the Soviet venture.

In the Berlin Crisis of 1958 the Soviet Union attempted to pressure the U.S., Britain and France into an agreement to remove their occupation forces from Berlin, to recognize East Germany and have West Germany leave NATO. The ultimatum called for an agreement within six months or control of access to West Berlin would be turned over to

East Germany. Western noncompliance with the demands resulted in the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Most recently, the Soviets followed through with threats to hamper access to the city again by causing trouble in the West Berlin air corridors after US INF missiles were deployed in West Germany.¹⁵

Judging from the outcomes of these events, it appears that the Soviet Union has had little success in using Berlin as a "stick" to pressure West Germany and the U.S. into security alternatives that are favorable to it. During the Berlin Crises the U.S. was willing to call the Kremlin's bluff, perhaps because Khrushchev had already lost his credibility by falsely threatening rockets and bombs over Suez and landings in Lebanon and Jordan.¹⁶

In any case, the Kremlin continues to take advantage of opportunities to remind West Germany that it depends on Soviet magnanimity for the smooth functioning of the Four Power agreement. In June of 1981 the GDR elected delegates to its legislature directly from East Berlin. This was in direct violation of the Western interpretation of the 1971 agreement. Neither the GDR nor the FRG can directly elect

¹⁵Angela E. Stent, "Western Europe and the USSR," Areas of Challenge for Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1980's by Gerrit W. Gong, Angela E. Stent and Rebecca V. Strode (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 8.

¹⁶Adam B. Ulam, "The Perils of Khrushchev," Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-1973, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1974), p. 620.

delegates from Berlin to their national legislatures because Berlin remains under Four Power control.¹⁷

The position of Berlin is much more secure, from the Western point of view, since the Quadripartite Treaty was signed in 1971. The treaty commits the USSR to ensure unimpeded access to Berlin from West Germany and to recognize the significance of West German ties to West Berlin. The USSR has even gone so far as to hold the status of Berlin practically immune from the periodic surges of East-West tension and make it an "island of detente." This may show that the Soviets see more utility in the maintenance of the improved status of Berlin as a "carrot" to convince the FRG of the benefits to be obtained if it fails to support American policies that the Soviets consider sources of increased East-West tensions.¹⁸ Indeed, since the improvements in the status of Berlin have proved to be the most tangible and reliable fruits of detente for the FRG, they have been one of the main reasons for West Germany's continued staunch commitment to Ostpolitik and detente. This commitment usually works to the advantage of the Soviets when they seek to bring the U.S. and NATO back to a softer line after Soviet aggression has caused East-West relations to cool.

¹⁷Stent, "Western Europe and the USSR," p. 19.

¹⁸Stent, "Western Europe and the USSR," p. 20.

B. POLITICAL VULNERABILITIES

West Germany's political vulnerabilities to Soviet influence spring from its desire to normalize and stabilize relations with Eastern Europe (particularly East Germany) in order to minimize the effects of the division of Europe and Germany. The main avenue for normalizing relations has been trade, although improved East-West contacts in the form of eased travel and emigration restrictions have also figured prominently. The FRG's aspirations regarding improved inter-German relations (Deutschlandpolitik) and relations with the Warsaw Pact (Ostpolitik) are inspired by the belief that this normalization will enhance overall European stability and West European security and even cause the Soviet Union to loosen its grip somewhat over the East bloc. Because the Federal Republic so strongly desires these improvements and because the Soviet Union must ultimately approve them, the Kremlin seeks to use them to influence West German and NATO foreign policy. An additional political vulnerability which Moscow attempts to use as an instrument of influence is the Federal Republic's sensitivity regarding Germany's belligerent past, particularly the Nazi period. The West German political and economic vulnerabilities associated with its Ostpolitik will be discussed first.

1. Ostpolitik: East-West Trade¹⁹

a. History and Theory

To understand the theory of Ostpolitik it is useful to look briefly at its evolution. After the creation of the West German state in 1949 Chancellor Adenauer followed a "policy of strength" aimed at withholding legitimacy and permanence from Eastern Germany by conducting no relations with the GDR or any state that recognized it, which included the whole of Eastern Europe (the main premise of the Hallstein Doctrine). The goal was to force a change in the political order of Europe and promote German reunification by nonrecognition and nonratification of the new postwar borders of Eastern Europe. Besides being ineffective, the policy became completely undermined by the U.S. choice to break with it and pursue a policy of detente with the USSR following the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. After the bout with nuclear brinkmanship President Kennedy was interested in East-West stabilization through arms control. He also felt that German reunification was no longer a realistic objective, and so chose to stop pursuing it, leaving Adenauer to go it alone with the policy of strength.

¹⁹In this section the author has borrowed heavily from Josef Joffe's chapter, "The View from Bonn: The Tacit Alliance," in Eroding Empire: Western Relations with Eastern Europe, ed. Lincoln Gordon (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1987), pp. 39-66.

Unwilling to give up its raison de nation at this point, the FRG began its "policy of movement." The policy, as the name implies, was dedicated to making openings to the East through economic engagement while still bypassing the GDR and the Soviet Union. The policy was predictably and successfully blocked by the Soviets, and was then replaced in 1966 with Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik. The new policy of the CDU/CSU-SPD (Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union-Social Democratic Party) Grand Coalition government was aimed at achieving stabilization and normalization of relations with the East through detente without many of Adenauer's preconditions. The Hallstein Doctrine was dismantled and reunification was removed as the price of detente in Europe, though it remained the evolutionary goal. However, it was not until 1969, with the election of an SPD government, that West Germany was willing to take the final steps of rapprochement with the East and affirm the territorial status quo in Eastern Europe and recognize the GDR (albeit as a state within one German nation). To formally take these steps renunciation of force treaties were signed with Moscow, Warsaw and Prague and the Basic Treaty with the GDR (regulating state to state relations).

The New Ostpolitik was a complete break with past policy. It replaced denial and isolation with engagement and cooperation, yet the goal of changing the

political order of Europe remained the same. It was hoped that by accepting the status quo in Eastern Europe and pursuing a completely non-confrontational policy toward the East that the Soviets would be reassured of the West's cooperative goals and consequently relax control over East-West trade and contacts, and even extend domestic freedoms to the peoples of Eastern Europe. The intention was (and is) that Ostpolitik would provide the modus vivendi in a divided Europe that would bring about an evolution of the East-West borders so thorough as to make them insignificant. At the same time it was hoped that the Kremlin's being reassured about peaceful Western intentions would naturally improve the FRG's security vis a vis the East. According to Hans Dietrich Genscher, the FDP West German Foreign Minister, Ostpolitik

...is intended, in the short term to mitigate the effects of the division of Europe and, in the long term, to foster an evolutionary process in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union itself, leading to a greater freedom for the people in the East and to a genuine peace order in Europe.²⁰

These goals for West German Ostpolitik have not changed up to the present day; even a conservative government (the current CDU/CSU-FDP coalition) has not altered the policy. The policy, which is viewed as the ultimate stabilizing factor between the superpowers of East and West has taken on an even greater significance as

²⁰"Toward an Overall Western Strategy for Peace, Freedom and Progress," Foreign Affairs (Fall 1982), p. 43.

American leadership appears (to West Europeans) alternately untrustworthy and confrontational (and always unpredictable). West Germany's special relationships with the U.S. and the USSR cause it to often act as arbiter between the two. However, its perceived dependence on both for its security leave it with less than complete freedom of action in its foreign policy. This is why the FRG's interest in Ostpolitik constitutes such a deep vulnerability to Soviet influence in that country.

b. Soviet Westpolitik

Soviet Westpolitik means taking advantage of West German Ostpolitik (and West European detente policies). Soviet interests deal primarily with increased political influence, but are economic, as well. The Soviet Union exploits West German interests in normalized relations with Eastern Europe to achieve its own goals by extending or withdrawing desired trade and contact concessions to promote policies favorable to it (the perennial "carrot and stick" approach). Before and after the U.S. INF missiles were deployed in West Germany, the FRG was promised several new trade and contact concessions as well as threatened with the loss of existing agreements. The FRG was also threatened with economic reprisals if it joined the U.S. in trade sanctions against the USSR after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

As yet, the Soviet Union has not carried out any of these threats against West Germany in its efforts to influence FRG security policy. Moscow appears to favor offering inducements. It uses this tactic in the hopes of promoting long term trade agreements. Such agreements (particularly bilateral ones) allow the Kremlin to promote its peaceful (and hegemonic) intentions while undercutting the EC (European Community) and European unity. It also makes Moscow appear reliable and promotes a gradual deepening of West German (and West European) economic dependence on the Soviet Union. Additionally, the Soviet Union profits economically from West German trade due to its great need for manufactures, high-technology transfers and hard currency from the West.

As in its political agreements the Soviet Union seeks to codify and legalize economic bilateral commitments. In 1978 the USSR and FRG signed a 25-year agreement which commits them to increasing the range and extent of their bilateral trade and thus provides the desired institutional framework for further long term economic ties.²¹ The next section will explore the extent of West Germany's economic stake in Ostpolitik.

²¹Angela Stent, "The USSR and Germany," Problems in Communism (September-October 1981), p. 10.

c. Energy and Economic Dependency²²

The Ostpolitik achievements of East-West trade agreements are primarily political (perceived gains in stability and security), but as trade expands (particularly in energy) the gains become economic as well. As East-West trade becomes more valuable to West Germany it becomes more significant as an instrument of influence for Moscow. Additionally, as markets for higher priced or less technologically advanced products become harder to find (let alone guarantee), West German trade agreements with Eastern Europe may take on a new significance.²³

Although West Germany seeks economic interdependence with the Warsaw Pact to achieve political goals, it takes some measures to guard against overdependence on the East (particularly in energy). These will be discussed further below.

The United States, however, remains concerned that West Germany has become too dependent on Eastern bloc trade both for its economic and political rewards, particularly since the FRG seems unwilling to relinquish any of its agreements to participate in U.S. sanctions against the USSR or the East bloc. It is significant to note, when

²²This section borrows heavily from the ideas of John Van Oudenaren in The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1984).

²³Van Oudenaren, The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage, p. 45.

considering West German and Soviet efforts to promote a level of economic dependence of one on the other, a particular asymmetry of effects; a totalitarian and basically autarkic system will be much more immune to economic dependence than a democratic, capitalistic system.

West German trade with CMEA (Community for Mutual Economic Assistance) countries comprises a small portion of its overall trade. Indeed, the Soviet share of the West German market is less than that achieved by countries who have in the past used trade effectively as an instrument of political control.²⁴ Currently, only 2.8 percent of FRG trade is with the USSR and 8 percent with Eastern Europe, but for certain industries and firms the export markets in the East are crucial.²⁵ This is because the Warsaw Pact is such a large market (and one of the few such markets) for goods appropriate for industrializing countries (the largest for West Germany).²⁶ In the export-dependent machine-tool industry the Soviet Union is responsible for 11 percent of West German exports;²⁷ for

²⁴Van Oudenaren, The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage, p. 36.

²⁵Stent, "The USSR and Germany," p. 9.

²⁶Van Oudenaren, The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage, p. 36.

²⁷Jess Lukomski, "Bonn Seeking Closer Moscow Trade Ties," Journal of Commerce, November 15, 1983, cited in John Van Oudenaren, The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1984), p. 36.

many machine-tool firms the Eastern bloc takes as much as 50 percent of their production.²⁸ In the metals sector, the steel giant Mannesman exports 60 percent of its large diameter pipe to the Soviet Union (one of its factories produces this pipe solely for the USSR). Overall, a total of 92,000 West Germans are employed in export trade with the Soviet Union.²⁹ Much of this trade is a direct result of the building of two Soviet natural gas pipelines to Western Europe, one completed in 1970 and the other in 1983. This brings up the question of West German vulnerability through economic dependence on the Soviet Union for energy.

In energy, unlike other industries, the Soviet Union has a larger market share in West European and West German supply. West Germany is 30 percent dependent on Soviet natural gas and 5 percent for its total energy needs. Also, in certain parts of the FRG, such as Bavaria, these dependency figures are much higher still.

The FRG (and France and Italy) have made concerted efforts to limit energy dependence by diversifying energy sources (natural gas from Norway and the Netherlands), storing reserves, and using dual fired burners in industry whereby power stations can switch from gas to

²⁸Wolfgang Hoffman, "Fuer den Osten Nichts Neues," Die Zeit, 13 May 1983, cited in John Van Oudenaren, The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1984), p. 36.

²⁹Stent, "The USSR and Germany," p. 11.

coal or oil. These measures are adequate for the present, but with the world oil market expected to get tighter, West Germans (and West Europeans) will find it necessary to import more natural gas in the future. And with other nations cutting back on production and raising prices Soviet and Algerian gas may be the most affordable and available sources in the 1990's, when West Germans may be needing 20 percent more natural gas from outside Europe. It will be particularly difficult to turn to other sources of energy if imports remain tied to exports of West German manufactured goods which are not that marketable elsewhere.

In light of increased West European dependence on Soviet energy it is necessary to explore the possibilities for actual use of natural gas cutoffs as political leverage. The Soviets' past record shows them willing to use energy supplies as a political tool. In 1948 the USSR cut off oil exports to Yugoslavia in response to Tito's disobedience. In 1960 the same treatment was extended to China and Albania. The Soviets used cheap oil to try to bring Cuba into the Soviet bloc and then stopped oil supplies in 1967 to try to force Castro into accepting more Soviet influence in his foreign policy. In the non-communist world there are fewer examples. In 1956 the

Soviet Union cut off oil supplies to Israel during the Suez Conflict.³⁰

Despite this past behavior there are several reasons which militate against the use of a gas cutoff by the Soviets to influence West German and NATO behavior. The USSR's detente objectives call for increasing Soviet influence through the creation of long-term, stable bilateral trade agreements with the West. This allows for a gradual growth of dependence on Soviet energy, provides the Soviets with much needed technology and hard currency and confirms the Soviets' peaceful intentions, all paving the way for the ultimate goal of an "all European" political order. Steady, reliable energy (and other trade) performance on the part of the Soviets enhances West European dependence on these agreements and produces a "system-preserving" situation wherein West Germans are less likely to react to Soviet initiatives (military build-up and third world engagements) or to support U.S. actions of which the USSR disapproves. It is unlikely that the Soviets would jeopardize these long term goals with an attempt to achieve a short term political goal through a gas cutoff.³¹ Although the Kremlin may threaten such a cutoff, it will be cautious in making the threats and unlikely to carry them

³⁰Van Oudenaren, The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage, p. 7.

³¹Van Oudenaren, The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage, p. 7.

out, particularly in a period of oil and gas gluts on the international market.

West Germany's vulnerability to such a cutoff cannot be completely dismissed, however. According to John Van Oudenaren,

The Soviet Union might resort to embargo in situations where it felt itself on the defensive and compelled to respond to a Western initiative. Developments that might provoke such a response could include a crisis in Eastern Europe involving real or perceived Western interference, 'provocative' US weapons deployments in Western Europe, or the creation of a multinational West European nuclear force.³²

Given the seriousness but unlikelihood of such occurrences, the real danger to West Germany (and Western Europe) is the possibility of its political immobilization resulting from its desires to preserve the benefits of economic gains and (perceived) political stability derived from greater economic and energy dependence on the East.

One of the primary objectives of Soviet policy in the FRG is to use its influence there to affect U.S. behavior. The USSR attempts to benefit from the special relationship between the U.S. and the Federal Republic by exploiting its own privileged relationship with the FRG. This can be accomplished, once again, by playing on the West German interests in Ostpolitik.

The FRG believes that any confrontational behavior (or actions that could be construed as such by the

³²Van Oudenaren, The Urengoi Pipeline: Prospects for Soviet Leverage, p. vi.

Soviets) would play into the hands of Soviet "hard liners" waiting for an excuse to tighten the grip on Eastern Europe and renew the Cold War. Therefore, Bonn will go far to try to convince the U.S. not to take retaliatory action (political or economic) against the Soviet Union for what Washington perceives as externally aggressive or internally repressive Soviet behavior. This plays nicely into the hands of the Soviets, who must be grateful for any help they can receive in softening the U.S. hard line against them. These West German efforts also cause disunity in the Atlantic Alliance, which is another Soviet goal.

Perhaps the best examples of such actions on the part of the FRG can be found in the Western reactions to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the imposition of martial law in Poland in 1981. In both cases, the United States chose to communicate its displeasure to the Kremlin over Soviet actions via economic sanctions. Because of the FRG's strong belief (more so than in the rest of Western Europe) in the political value of East-West trade (and the futility of economic sanctions), Bonn refused to follow the U.S. lead. The FRG displayed its unwillingness to break the long term international trade agreements and treaties with the East and suffer the possibly irretrievable loss of perceived gains in stability and security. Both incidents are described in more detail below.

In early 1980, following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter chose to levy a grain embargo against the Soviet Union in response to the military aggression. He also embargoed various high-technology items and heavy machine equipment. The economic effectiveness of the embargo was greatly impaired by the lack of EC support for the measures. The West Germans were indirectly threatened with economic reprisals if they went along with the U.S. sanctions. Theo Sommer, an editor for the German weekly, Die Zeit, quoted a Soviet "functionary" as stating that, "it is an open secret that you get not only natural gas from us, but also a considerable quantity of strategic raw materials. This has so far worked without any restriction."³³ It is impossible to know if the implied threat made a difference in its decision, but the West German government chose to preserve Ostpolitik and participate in the boycott of the Olympic games rather than in the U.S. trade embargo.

The West German reactions to the incidents in Poland (1980-82) are an even better example of West German hopes and fears for Ostpolitik, and how these hopes further Soviet objectives in Europe. From the beginning of the

³³Theo Sommer, "The Kremlin Does not Believe in Words," Die Zeit, 4 April 1980, cited in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report: Western Europe, 4 April 1980.

conflict the West Germans tried to downplay the issue and focus attention on the "Polishness" of the crisis and away from Soviet involvement. Willy Brandt, the then chairman of the SPD, harshly criticized American involvement and sanctions. He accused Washington of "indulging in an orgy of impotence."³⁴ By stressing that Poland should be allowed to solve its problems alone without interference from abroad, Bonn was letting the Soviets know that if given some positive signs (such as the softening of martial law) it would try to forestall harsh American countermeasures. The FRG was trying to promote the stability of the Polish regime because a Russian invasion would destroy all the political gains of Ostpolitik/detente. According to Josef Joffe,

...since Moscow is the ultimate arbiter of evolution in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union must be reassured [of Western non-intervention] even to the point where Ostpolitik becomes a silent--and above all, discreet--partner in the maintenance of regime stability and Soviet authority in Eastern Europe.³⁵

This is why Chancellor Schmidt initially denied any Soviet responsibility for the Jaruzelski coup and why Bonn worked so hard to hold off Western sanctions.

Along with other major EC members West Germany strenuously opposed the American embargo of high-technology and other equipment for the construction of the Urengoi

³⁴Joffe, "The View from Bonn: The Tacit Alliance," p. 159.

³⁵Joffe, "The View from Bonn: The Tacit Alliance," p. 161.

natural gas pipeline (from Siberia to Western Europe). To have supported the embargo would have meant breaking the cardinal rules of Ostpolitik--to reassure instead of rattle, to protect regional detente and to treat East Europeans as tacit allies (rather than enemies) in seeking a more stable, secure Central Europe.³⁶

A more recent incident involves the West German decision to participate with the U.S. (and a few other Western nations) in research activities for the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Many high ranking officials of the coalition government, particularly the Foreign Minister, Hans Dietrich Genscher (FDP leader) were deeply concerned over the possible harm this decision might have on East-West relations and arms control. The Soviets have loudly expressed their strong opposition to the development of SDI since President Reagan announced the program.

As a result of the FDP and Minister Genscher's skepticism, several conditions were added to the research agreement to put some distance between FRG efforts and the image of the project--an image of U.S. initiative in "arms race" activity. These conditions reportedly include: no financial contribution, no direct government role, no political framework agreement, no involvement beyond the

³⁶Joffe, "The View from Bonn: The Tacit Alliance," p. 162.

initial research-only phase of SDI and assurances of U.S. technology transfer to West Germany. Bonn obviously hopes to reassure the Kremlin of its non-military, low-key economic and technical involvement in the controversial project.³⁷

In addition to fears that the project might be perceived as provocative by the Soviets, the West Germans have several other grounds for reservations about SDI. These include the possibility of the decoupling of U.S. and West European defense as a result of Soviet BMD (Ballistic Missile Defense) reducing the credibility of U.S. nuclear guarantees. Bonn also fears possible destabilization through a U.S.-Soviet BMD "arms race." West Germans argue that if BMD systems reduced the utility of nuclear weapons, it would only make Europe safer for a conventional war.³⁸

West German perceptions regarding the need to preserve European stability and security by avoiding confrontation with Moscow--and, indeed, seeking to reassure the Soviets--tend to enhance Moscow's position and harm that of the U.S. in Europe. The U.S. punitive actions against the USSR have been repeatedly thwarted by the lack of FRG and EC participation. In the Polish crisis the FRG was even willing to subtly support Soviet repression in order to

³⁷David S. Yost, "Western Europe and the Strategic Defense Initiative," unpublished source, 1987, p. 30.

³⁸Yost, "Western Europe and the Strategic Defense Initiative," p. 30.

avoid East-West confrontation. In the case of the U.S. embargo for Urengoi pipeline equipment FRG and EC responses forced the cancellation of the U.S. policy altogether.

2. Deutschlandpolitik

a. FRG Interest in Trade and Contacts with GDR

West Germany's deep aspirations for improved inter-German relations (Deutschlandpolitik) provide another powerful tool for Soviet leverage in the FRG. The Federal Republic's strong interest in Deutschlandpolitik is both political and emotional. Broader trade and contacts with East Germany are pursued to achieve the political goals of Ostpolitik. However, in the case of the GDR (as opposed to the other nations of Eastern Europe) the residual sense of a common German nationhood causes the efforts toward better ties to be more fervent. The improved relations between the Germanys are extremely important to West Germans, one quarter of whom have relatives in East Germany. The gains associated with better relations consist primarily of improved conditions for travel and trade between East and West Germany. This means reduced visitation fees (or exchange requirements for travelling to the GDR), the ability to buy the freedom of West Germans imprisoned in the GDR, and higher limits on East to West family contacts and emigration.

Since the signing of the Moscow Treaty (1970) and the Basic Treaty (1972) between the two Germanys and the

Helsinki Final Act (the document approved in 1975 by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), in the early detente years there have been great improvements in all areas of relations between the two German states. For example, in 1981 about 8 million West Germans visited the GDR (which has a population of 17 million) compared to the pre-detente figure of 2.5 million.³⁹ Because of the many concrete gains achieved by the FRG, it has developed a strong interest in continuing the detente (or Ostpolitik) process to maintain and broaden the gains. The Soviet Union can readily exploit this interest to influence policy in the FRG, in the U.S. (through the FRG) and the rest of NATO Europe. It does so by offering to grant new concessions in inter-German relations or threatening to withdraw others to elicit particular behavior from the FRG or its allies.

The Kremlin used this tool along with FRG interest in a broader Ostpolitik with the Warsaw Pact to try to influence West German reactions to the Afghanistan and Polish Crises, and most recently in the anti-INF campaign.

Throughout the campaign from 1979 to 1983 the Soviets alternately warned that inter-German ties would suffer or promised that they would improve if the FRG deployed (or did not deploy) the U.S. missiles on its soil. The then Soviet Party Chief Yuri Andropov implied the possibility of a severe worsening of relations when he said

³⁹Stent, "The USSR and Germany," p. 17.

that the FRG and GDR would have to "...look at one another through thick palisades of missiles" as a result of the deployment.⁴⁰

b. Inter-German Relations

West Germany has so internalized its Deutschlandpolitik that today any party seeking election to power in the FRG must be committed to continued gains in inter-German relations. Relations between the two German states have improved greatly since 1969 and therefore have gained an important role in the detente process.

In the post-war years both the FRG and GDR were staunchly opposed to relations with one another. Adenauer sought to promote a renewed strength for the FRG as well as reunification by not recognizing the GDR. The GDR, under the leadership of Walter Ulbricht, employed the strictest exclusionist policies in order to ensure stability in East Germany, and to try to pressure West Germany into recognition of the GDR as a separate nation.

Once the United States had begun its policies of rapprochement with the Soviet Union in the early 1960's and detente with the East had been formalized by NATO in the Harmel Report of 1967, the Federal Republic faced the choice of change or isolation in its Eastern policy. The Federal

⁴⁰David S. Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," Soviet Strategic Deception, ed. Brian Dailey and Patrick Parker (Lexington and Toronto: DC Heath and Company, 1987), p. 356.

Republic, as previously discussed, opted to follow the Alliance policies. As the centerpiece of the New Ostpolitik the FRG chose to extend recognition to the GDR as a separate German state, but a state within one German nation. This was not the full recognition of sovereignty that the East Germans desired. Even beyond their dissatisfaction over this the GDR remained opposed to any openings to West Germany. East Berlin feared possible destabilization from Western contacts, but Ulbricht also found it difficult to give up his veto power with the Soviet Union over East-West relations on the Continent.⁴¹

The Kremlin, however, was prepared to open its Westpolitik and extend concessions on inter-German relations (and those with Eastern Europe) to the FRG in the hopes of gaining badly needed technology and credits as well as political influence there. For this reason Moscow replaced the intransigent Ulbricht with Erich Honecker in 1971 as the head of the East German Socialist Unity Party (SED), and began the process of normalizing relations with the West.

East Germany still practiced a policy of Abgrenzung (limiting East-West contacts), but as both states began to make concessions to one another and the benefits were felt the new Deutschlandpolitik grew and flourished. As contacts and trade expanded, both nations gained a common

⁴¹Joffe, "The View from Bonn: The Tacit Alliance," p. 148.

interest in the new benefits--particularly the economic benefits garnered from their stronger ties.

Trade with East Germany is treated as domestic trade and the GDR is, therefore, a de facto member of the EC. The GDR derives great benefits from its own products entering the European market on the same terms as those of the FRG (no additional tariffs). The GDR also receives FRG investment and consumer goods, enjoys West German construction of highways from East to West Germany and "swing" credits between the two states (no-interest loans to cover trade deficits with the FRG).⁴² Besides gaining an economic interest in improved ties, the GDR and FRG came to realize that they had a political interest in minimizing the chances of open conflict in Central Europe. Therefore, each stood to lose if detente were to give way to renewed Cold War.

For this reason, when the superpowers began to experience a crisis of detente in the late 1970's the Germanys made strong efforts to preserve their Deutschlandpolitik. Between the improved East-West contacts and trade (and stabilization of the situation in Berlin) the FRG and GDR had received the most tangible gains from detente and had, therefore, developed an interest in maintaining the gains.

⁴²Stent, "The USSR and Germany," p. 19.

In the mid-1970's the United States and NATO became distressed over Soviet involvement in Marxist revolutions in Angola and Ethiopia, but were unwilling to give up detente in protest. The "crisis of detente" deepened with the invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. The U.S. chose to cool relations with Moscow and levy trade sanctions. In the same month NATO made the "dual track decision" to modernize European theater nuclear forces to help compensate for new Soviet deployments of SS-20 missiles in Eastern Europe (among other purposes). The West European governments (particularly France and the FRG) were, however, most interested in saving detente as East-West tensions rose as a result of both crises. They explained their efforts by stating that Europe had to maintain detente so as to mediate the new superpower standoff and avert East-West military conflict. The East European governments were also reluctant to join in the new freeze. On 30 April 1979 the GDR even concluded a five-year 1,281 million dollar agreement with the FRG for road, rail and water links between West Berlin and Bonn.⁴³

When the unrest began in Poland in 1980 and East-West relations grew cooler still, West Germany tried yet again to maintain its Ostpolitik and Deutschlandpolitik by not participating in Western sanctions, and keeping communication links open to the East. East Berlin had

⁴³Hassner, "Moscow and the Western Alliance," p. 48.

similar desires, but felt compelled to react defensively to this crisis in the East Bloc. Although the possibility of a free trade union movement appearing in East Germany was slim, the East Berlin government, nevertheless feared the Polish problems might be contagious. Therefore, the GDR tightened its state contacts somewhat (including those to the West). In October several measures were passed to reduce intra-German contacts including a doubling of the minimum exchange fee for visitors from West to East Germany.⁴⁴ Aside from less visitation from the West inter-German contacts weathered the crisis well and Deutschlandpolitik remained intact overall.

The next cooling period in East-West relations occurred in 1983 after the INF missiles began to be deployed in Western Europe. Yet again, West Germany and the GDR made efforts to insulate their relations from superpower tensions. During the anti-missile campaign the GDR had used appeals to the common interests of all Germans to stop the deployment and once the deployment was begun it maintained its "national" approach. While criticizing the West German decision, East Berlin spoke of "limiting the damage" to inter-German relations. The East German government also

⁴⁴Hassner, "Moscow and the Western Alliance," p. 48.

showed a marked lack of enthusiasm in accepting the Soviet countermissiles on its soil.⁴⁵

Although the GDR has fulfilled strong desires in its population by maintaining closer links with West Germany and has gained enormous economic advantages from the relationship, it still risks destabilization as a result of the increased contacts. Because eighty percent of East Germans watch West German television, the gap between official information and the Western version of real world events is more visible and bound to have effects on the population. For example, during 1980 and 1981 Eastern exposure to the West German peace movement in the media may have contributed to the formation of an unofficial East German version which condemned not only NATO missiles in Western Europe, but Warsaw Pact nuclear strategy, as well.⁴⁶

c. Soviet-GDR Relations

Due to the Soviet Union's preponderant strength and because the GDR ultimately relies on it for its own legitimacy, the USSR will always have more to offer the GDR than the GDR to it. However, East Germany is still the Soviet Union's most important ally. The GDR is the Soviet Union's biggest trading partner as well as its ideological

⁴⁵Richard Lowenthal, "The German Question Transformed," Foreign Affairs (Winter 1984), p. 312.

⁴⁶Edwina Moreton, "The German Factor," Soviet Strategy Toward Western Europe, ed. by Edwina Moreton and Gerald Segal (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1984), p. 132.

bulwark in the East bloc. Perhaps the GDR's greatest value to the Soviet Union, however, is its ability to be used as a Soviet military or political proxy in Western Europe and beyond.

From a military perspective the Soviet Union can use East German troops (even more readily than Cuban troops) to support Marxist factions in Third World revolutions to help distance itself from blame for superpower intervention. More important, East Germany can be used as a tool to increase Soviet influence in Western Europe through East Berlin's relationship with Bonn.

This is not to say that the GDR simply takes orders from the Soviet Union in its foreign policy-making. The GDR has grown much stronger and more self-confident since the post war years, and is consequently allowed more maneuver in its decision-making. It is also in the interest of both the GDR and the Soviet Union for East Germany to appear more self-reliant and promote a stronger image internationally. The close inter-German relationship that detente has spawned provides the Soviets with an excellent degree of access to the West. Therefore, as long as the GDR's policies enhance Soviet interests it will continue to be allowed a larger degree of independent decision-making ability, while the Kremlin remains well-informed and capable of intervening if necessary.

As discussed above, there have been several cases during the "crisis of detente" period (1975-1985) in which the Soviet and East German policy lines did not converge. In other words, the GDR maintained a softer stance toward the West while the Soviets took a harsher approach, if only in a steady stream of negative rhetoric.

There are various explanations for the divergence in policies. It is possible that the GDR was following a more forthcoming approach to preserve its inter-German detente, and that the Kremlin allowed this so that both threats and concessions could be used to try to bring the U.S. and NATO back to a softer line. This explanation gains credibility when one considers the stake the Kremlin has built in the FRG commitment to Ostpolitik and detente. If the FRG's most valuable gains of its Deutschland and Ostpolitik prove to be transitory, the Kremlin may lose its most powerful lever of influence in NATO--the strong FRG support for detente.

It is also possible that the GDR policy did not meet with the approval of the Kremlin, but as proposed above, Moscow was perhaps reluctant to intervene (until absolutely necessary) so as not to risk either the FRG's commitment to detente or damaging the international image of the GDR as a sovereign state. When superpower relations became distant after the INF deployments began in 1983 (the Soviets walked out of the START and INF talks in Geneva),

the GDR joined FRG efforts to maintain close relations and minimize the damage to renewed East-West tensions. The GDR policy was at direct odds with that publicly maintained by the Kremlin, but Moscow did not interfere until the divergence became more acute. In the same year the GDR accepted an unprecedented bank loan of DM 1 billion from the FRG.⁴⁷ It appears that the Kremlin decided that the timing of the loan deal (coming so soon after the missile deployments and the Soviet response) was poor, and that inter-German relations were becoming too close and unsupervised. As a result, Erich Honecker was pressed by Moscow to cancel his visit to the FRG and then forced to mimic the renewed Soviet charges against West German revanchism.

One can conclude from this action that the Soviets remain in firm control of GDR foreign policy, and that although contrasting policies (between it and the FRG) may be useful, too great a divergence makes Moscow uneasy about the closeness and autonomy of inter-German relations. Of course, in the end, the GDR must always bend to Soviet pressure since the legitimacy of its own rule is ultimately guaranteed by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Stent, "Western Europe and the USSR," p. 8.

⁴⁸Lowenthal, "The German Question Transformed," p. 314.

d. FRG Sensitivity Over Germany's Past

West Germans are still suffering from the painful wounds of global disgrace resulting from the Hitler movement and World War II (1933-1945). The Soviet Union ensures that these wounds remain open by periodically exploiting this sensitivity through harsh rhetoric aimed at shaming the FRG into action or inaction over NATO defense measures. Soviet allegations of West German revanchism are usually used in conjunction with other instruments to try to increase Soviet influence over FRG policies. The Soviet Union has also used the threat of West German revanchism as an argument and justification for maintaining control over Eastern Europe.⁴⁹

Indeed, the only lull in the continuous barrage of Soviet rhetoric decrying West German revanchism occurred during the main part of the detente period from 1969-1979. As soon as it appeared that the West Germans might be forsaking their "peaceful" commitment to detente by accepting U.S. INF missile deployments on their soil the rhetoric began anew. Following is an excerpt from a TASS article which criticizes the "militaristic" missile deployments and the "undemocratic" forces at work in the FRG, visible in the harsh treatment of peace demonstrators, all resulting from revived West German revanchism:

⁴⁹Stent, "Western Europe and the USSR," p. 2.

Sensible people are aware that there is a direct relationship between Bonn's course of deploying nuclear missiles and stepping up the militarization of West Germany, on the one hand, and the marked revival of revanchism, the toughening line of 'intimidation at home' and the further restriction of the democratic rights of broad sections of the population on the other.⁵⁰

When Chancellor Kohl visited Moscow in 1983 General Secretary Andropov also alluded to Soviet fears of future West German aggression as a result of the INF deployments when he said,

It is planned to turn West German territory into a launching site for American first-strike nuclear missiles aimed at the Soviet Union and its allies. This would actually mean the revival of the threat of war against the USSR being unleashed from German soil.⁵¹

Statements like these attempt to use West German guilt feelings and deep desires for continued detente to promote the idea that Soviet fears brought on by Western confrontationalism need to be counteracted with some form of reassurance. West European efforts to take action to reassure the Soviets (through arms reductions, for example) can have the affect of improving the Soviet political and military posture vis a vis Western Europe.

⁵⁰"FRG Peace Marches Protest US Missiles," TASS, 23 April 1984, cited in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, USSR International Affairs, Vol. III, No. 81, 25 April 1984, p. G9.

⁵¹Andropov remarks reported in TASS in Soviet World Outlook, Vol. 8, No. 7, 15 July 1983, p. 3, cited in David Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," Soviet Strategic Deception, ed. by Brian Dailey and Patrick Parker (Lexington and Toronto: DC Heath and Co., 1987), p. 356.

Since the tactic of exploiting West Germany's sensitivity over its past is usually employed in conjunction with others, such as threats of losing concessions in inter-German relations, it is difficult to judge the effectiveness of this particular measure (or any other specific measures for that matter).

The Soviet Union has also used statements regarding West German revanchism in the hopes of promoting disunity in the NATO Alliance by reminding the other West European powers (particularly France) of the continuing need to contain German power. This was the ploy used by Moscow to try to block West German entry into the European Defense Community after World War II, and to keep it from receiving or gaining control over nuclear weapons. In the case of becoming a nuclear power, the FRG has so thoroughly internalized the remaining post war constraints on its military power that such tactics are unnecessary.⁵²

The Soviet Union has also sought to legally constrain the FRG's defense options by calling attention to Germany's belligerent past. For instance, Moscow insisted on the inclusion of the Enemy States clause in the United Nations Charter. Article 53 of the Charter allows regional enforcement action to be taken against an enemy state (World

⁵²Gephard Schweigler, West German Foreign Policy: The Domestic Setting, Washington Paper No. 106 (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1984), p. 8.

War II enemy to any Charter signatory) without the authorization of the Security Council. The clause thus denies the FRG equal protection by Security Council deliberation under the Charter.

In this section some light has been shed on how the Soviet Union seeks to expand its influence in the FRG and Western Europe through exploitation of West German interests in East-West contacts, security from the East and, in a more minor way, through the FRG's sensitivities over its past. In the next chapter the success and failure of these tactics will be explored, as well as prospects for the future.

IV. ANALYSIS/ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET POLICIES⁵³

A. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

If Soviet tactics are at least in part responsible for persistent NATO disagreements (primarily between NATO Europe and the U.S.) over how or even whether to respond to Soviet aggression as well as the current trend toward the denuclearization of Western Europe (via an INF agreement), it seems the Soviets have indeed succeeded in expanding their influence in the FRG and Western Europe as a whole. The dynamic nature of the large number of variables at work in political developments makes it very difficult to determine which forces (Soviet or non-Soviet) should be given the most credit for these accomplishments. In most cases both types of factors are at work. The Soviets sometimes bring their influence to bear on circumstances already favorable to attaining their objectives and thereby bring about a political victory.

In this section Soviet successes linked to the USSR's detente policies, the growth of Soviet military power and, more specifically, the West European Peace Campaign will be

⁵³This section was heavily influenced by David S. Yost's chapter, "The Soviet Campaign Against INF in West Germany," in Soviet Strategic Deception, ed. by Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker (Lexington, Massachusetts and Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company), pp. 343-374.

discussed. In each area both Soviet and non-Soviet factors that may have contributed to the successes will be examined.

1. Detente

One of the main factors that has led to increased Soviet influence in the FRG and in Western Europe has been the Soviet detente policy established during the 1960's and 1970's. Moscow has proven the reliability and benefits of the many trade and contact agreements to West Germans (and West Europeans), who have developed an ever greater political and economic stake in East-West rapprochement. Therein lies the Soviet success. The West German (and West European) motivation to preserve the detente system and the process that created it will continue to support the increasing political immobility of the FRG (and Western Europe) in responding to Soviet aggression or repression.

The West German policy of Ostpolitik had its beginnings in a German reaction to an American policy switch. The eventual commitment to the policy came from deep desires for the normalization of relations with East Germany and Eastern Europe and later as a reaction to U.S. policies toward the East bloc perceived (by West Europeans) as overly aggressive. These are some of the non-Soviet factors which supported an East-West rapprochement. However, the West German (and West European) commitment to detente and Ostpolitik was greatly strengthened by Soviet efforts to make the improvements in inter-German and

inter-European relations and the Berlin situation worthwhile and secure (in the case of Berlin, secure even from superpower tensions).

This commitment allows the Soviets to promote disunity in NATO and weaken Western efforts to counter the expansion of Soviet political influence. After both the Afghanistan invasion and the Polish crisis neither West Germany nor most of the EC nations were willing to join the U.S. in punitive actions against the USSR in the form of trade sanctions. In the case of the U.S. boycott of Western technology and equipment for the Urengoi pipeline, the EC opposition was so severe that the U.S. was forced to back away from the policy altogether.

2. Military Power

The steady build-up of military power by the Soviets during the detente period and beyond has had a powerful effect on the West German and West European psyche and has consequently produced greater Soviet influence in NATO policy. It is difficult to measure this factor since it takes the form of a subliminal message reminding the FRG (and "the continent") that a new war in Europe is perhaps more likely to occur as the U.S. nuclear guarantee is weakened and loses deterrent value (through increased Soviet military might), and that such a war will be fatal.⁵⁴ This

⁵⁴Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," p. 362.

message has sometimes caused disunity in the Alliance as the U.S. sees the need to respond aggressively and match the Soviet military build-up, and the FRG and NATO perceive the need to reduce tensions and seek arms control. According to Pierre Hassner:

...the invasion of Afghanistan even seemed if anything, to encourage [European] opposition to the implementation of NATO's decision on theatre nuclear weapons, instead of rendering it easier by demonstrating the seriousness of the Soviet threat (as the action did to the American public). The increased plausibility of military danger appeared to lead to the conclusion that detente had to be saved at all costs.⁵⁵

Both Soviet detente policies and the USSR's increased military power have been responsible for the strong Western interest in arms control (not to mention the strong tendency toward such measures evident in Western political culture). In the period of reduced tensions, arms control became an accepted way to reduce the threat of war as a substitute for (rather than a complement to) achieving an East-West military balance.⁵⁶ Non-Soviet factors supporting this trend include the "aggressive" American image (under Reagan in his first term), West German sensitivities about nuclear weapons and any war that might involve German territory and the Western desire to believe

⁵⁵Hassner, "Moscow and the Western Alliance," p. 48.

⁵⁶Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," p. 362.

in the benevolence (or at least non-threatening character) of Soviet intentions.

Whatever the primary causes, the strong interest in arms reductions was translated into an ongoing negotiations process which serves to codify Soviet military superiority (and heighten Western awareness of it), and threatens to further weaken the U.S. nuclear guarantee through the signing of agreements with asymmetrical effects. Obviously, the establishment of Western commitment to this process is a great opportunity for Moscow. The recently ratified INF treaty is an excellent example of the fruits of the process. The treaty will remove all U.S. and Soviet long and short range INF missiles (ground-based missiles with ranges between 500 and 5500 km) from the world and appears to be a first step toward the denuclearization of Western Europe. The agreement may so thoroughly weaken West European confidence in the credibility of U.S. nuclear commitments that the USSR could greatly increase the intimidation factor tied to its even greater margin of superiority in other categories of military power.

3. Protest Movements

The European Peace Campaign of the late 1970's and early 1980s played a significant role in increasing Soviet influence in the region, particularly in West Germany. The movement had regional roots (many of the West German participants just switched the focus of their activism from

opposing nuclear power and industrial waste to blocking new U.S. weapons deployments), but large portions of the decision-making posts (about 1/2 in West Germany) were held by the local communist parties. This allowed the Soviets to indirectly block criticism of the Soviet Union in the movement (regarding the SS-20 missiles or Afghanistan) and to gather information about European publics that would allow the movement to use more effective propaganda.⁵⁷

The peace movement was instrumental in several Soviet political successes. In West Germany it helped to destroy the defense consensus by getting one of the main political parties (SPD) to endorse policies that can assist the Soviet Union in broadening its margin of military superiority in Europe. The SPD now supports the Soviet proposals for Nuclear Weapons Free Zones in Central Europe and a no-first-use of nuclear weapons policy. The peace movement also heightened the awareness of large portions of the public regarding nuclear issues and dilemmas. As a result of the increased public awareness of and concomitant desires to solve nuclear issues without new weapons, many experts in the FRG no longer consider it politically feasible to deploy new U.S. missiles in the FRG. In this way, the Kremlin has indirectly denied the FRG a defense option. The movement also socialized the younger successor

⁵⁷Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," p. 349.

generation into viewing both superpowers as equal partners in a plan to further nuclearize Europe and prompted them to seek distance from both.⁵⁸

The Soviet manipulation of the peace campaign certainly played a large role in increasing Moscow's influence in West Germany (as did such non-Soviet factors as West European perceptions of American foreign policy aggressiveness). However, the anti-INF campaign only served to magnify the forces that Soviet detente policies and preponderant military power had already put into action. As a result of these, West Germany and Western Europe had developed a strong interest in reducing tensions and increasing their security through arms control. These interests only serve to improve the military posture of the Soviet Union and increase its power to blackmail and intimidate.⁵⁹

B. FAILURES

The overall success of Soviet policies in the FRG and Western Europe seem to make it more appropriate to discuss Soviet setbacks vice clear-cut failures in the region. These would include the inability to block the first NATO INF deployments in 1983 and the failure to destroy, to a

⁵⁸Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," p. 346.

⁵⁹Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," p. 364.

significant degree, the cohesiveness of the Atlantic Alliance despite Soviet "wedge-driving" tactics.

One reason the anti-INF campaign may have failed is that the peace movement was unable to produce a decisive majority of INF opponents. Soviet over-confidence in the campaign due to the perceived success of the late 1970's peace movement in stopping the West European deployment of the neutron bomb (or Enhanced Radiation Weapon) may have been to blame. The decision not to deploy the ERW appears to have come about more as a result of President Carter's indecision over the production and deployment of the controversial weapon than any other reason. However, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's hesitancy to openly accept the bomb's deployment in West Germany was believed by many to have resulted from the large peace campaign mobilized to stop the deployment.

Another factor in the failure to halt the INF deployment may have been the GDR's refusal to follow the Soviet line in post INF punitive action toward West Germany. Continued intra-German detente did much to aid the smooth deployment of the missiles.⁶⁰ Whether or not this action was deliberate due to the Kremlin's interest in maintaining the FRG's commitment to detente cannot be known.

The other setback the Soviets have experienced in attempting to expand their influence in Western Europe has

⁶⁰Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," p. 365.

to do with the continued cohesiveness of the Alliance. This development is a result of a dilemma of Soviet military power. Although preponderant military power remains a useful tool of Soviet blackmail and intimidation, it necessarily also serves to cause the Alliance to seek to unite more closely against a more and more visibly powerful foe. This is particularly true in an Alliance where only the group's leader can defend itself alone against the common enemy.

In summary, it appears the Soviets have experienced significant success in expanding their influence in the FRG and in Western Europe. The setbacks they have suffered seem minor by comparison, yet are significant because they expose the continued unity and resolve of the Alliance when faced with important defense decisions despite the enhanced military and political position of the Soviet Union in Europe.

Soviet successes in the region can in part be attributed to the achievement of a firm West German (and West European) commitment to the detente and arms control process. Perhaps the greatest Soviet success of the period has been the polarization of the CDU/CSU and Social Democratic parties in West Germany over NATO nuclear policy in Europe. This may have far-reaching consequences for NATO if an SPD government comes to power in the FRG and does not moderate its current policy line of creating a Central European NWFZ and

accepting a no-first-use posture.⁶¹ The next section will discuss the future prospects of these successful policies and some alternative outcomes should Moscow take a different approach.

C. FUTURE PROSPECTS⁶²

1. Current Trends

In assessing future prospects for Soviet influence in the FRG, one must first identify present trends and the forces which operate to perpetuate or stifle them. The status quo today remains that of a divided Germany in a divided Europe. West Germany (and Western Europe) have chosen to recognize and accept the division in order to make the situation more bearable through detente (rather than actively seek unification). The status quo also involves the perception (in the West) of a general regional and a global balance of power between the superpowers and their alliances. The perception has engendered a feeling of security (or at least one of the non-imminence of war) and stability in the West. This secure feeling in the current detente atmosphere promotes political and military nonvigilance in the West which allows the Soviet Union to

⁶¹Yost, "The Campaign Against INF in West Germany," p. 367.

⁶²In this section, the author has borrowed heavily from Pierre Hassner's Change and Security in Europe Part I: The Background and Part II: In Search of a System, Adelphi Papers No. 45 and 49 (London: The Institute for Strategic Studies, 1968).

more effectively increase its influence in West Germany (and Western Europe). As the situation of Germany's and Europe's division becomes "normal" and the gains of detente and Ostpolitik are institutionalized, the West is in danger of feeling it has won the Cold War. This perception could instead lead to a victory for the Soviets in the form of military superiority and greater influence in the defense policies of West Germany and NATO.

This describes the current trend in which the Soviets are moving toward a Status Quo Plus or increased influence on West Germany and in NATO by capitalizing on West German desires for East-West normalization and arms control. In view of the most current efforts at East-West arms control evident in the INF agreement, and the continuing benefits in increased security and influence accruing to Moscow as a result of its detente and arms control efforts, it is unlikely that Moscow will change its current policies. Western Europe (and particularly West Germany), have developed a large enough stake (in economic and perceived political gains) in Ostpolitik and detente to remain committed to this pattern. Therefore, it seems likely that the trend toward a Status Quo Plus for the Soviet Union will continue. Even so, it is useful to examine some of the possible outcomes to a different, perhaps more aggressive Soviet policy in West Germany aimed

at producing a near-term, permanent split between the U.S. and the FRG and perhaps to a break-up of NATO altogether.

2. Dangerous Alternatives

If the Soviet Union were to pursue a more aggressive "wedge-driving" policy in West Germany aimed at successfully severing West German ties to the U.S. and NATO, several different outcomes regarding the FRG's international status could result. These would include a West Germany that was free and non-aligned (neutral), a possible West German attempt at reunification or a West Germany that was integrated into a more unified West European organization, either political or military. Each of these alternatives would provide Moscow with certain new security risks, a fact that may militate against Moscow's seeking them as short term objectives.

The first alternative of a non-aligned FRG seems to be the most unlikely. Incapable of fully providing for her own defense and positioned on the border of the Warsaw Pact, the FRG needs to be within some kind of collective security arrangement if it is to avoid becoming vulnerable to Soviet coercion. Because of the country's size and strength, it would be highly destabilizing to the regional and global balance of power for the FRG to leave the Atlantic Alliance. Therefore, it seems likely that the U.S. would exert considerable pressure to deter the move. If a non-aligned FRG were armed with a nuclear deterrent (however unlikely

this occurrence), the unpredictability of the situation would become more uncomfortable and hence, less attractive to the Soviets.

On the other hand, a neutral West Germany might have definite attractions for Moscow because of the state's greatly increased vulnerability to influence and attack. However, a neutral FRG that presented a lesser threat to the East and was unconstrained by responsibilities to the West might attempt to form a much closer relationship with East Germany. This could present the Soviet Union with several new problems. These might include less control over East Berlin's relationship with Bonn, a lack of justification for limiting East-West German contacts and the possible destabilization resulting from both closer inter-German ties and increased Western contacts.

This is not to say that an eventual end to FRG ties to NATO and the U.S. is not desired by the USSR in the long term, but that it could present several risks and problems for the Soviets in the short run. Because the Kremlin knows the chances of a break-up of NATO are relatively remote (due to the FRG's ideological leanings and security requirements), it can easily continue its policy of exploiting the relationships between NATO members and its own bilateral relations with them to foster disunity in the alliance and reduce U.S. influence in the FRG (and Western Europe)

without being overly concerned about an abrupt or destabilizing outcome.

This policy is furthered by the current popularity in West Germany of the disarmament theme, and the desire by the FDP and the left wing of the SPD to greatly improve ties with the USSR. A gradual forging of increasingly closer economic and political links between West Germany and the USSR would necessarily weaken its ties to the Atlantic Alliance while allowing an increase in Soviet influence. The trend could weaken NATO to the point where it becomes an impotent facade, while appearing to remain intact, making it very difficult for the West to become aware of the subtle process at work.

Another situation that might result from the FRG's exit from NATO would be efforts at reunifying or creating a confederation with East Germany. This alternative, too, is highly unlikely, considering the opposing political ideologies of both states. The Soviet Union's first priority in its German policy is defending the communism of the GDR which would be impossible under reunification. Even if both superpowers had disengaged from Central Europe, there would still remain ample European opposition to reunification for fear of Germany once again attempting to dominate the continent. Indeed, it would be difficult to find any Eastern or Western support for a German

reunification in the short term because of the possible destabilization that might result from it.

Although West Germany is still committed to reunification in its political rhetoric (as well as in its constitution), the real hopes for such an event have receded considerably. This has mostly to do with the West German unwillingness to trade any amount of freedom for reunification, and the knowledge that the current separation of the two Germanies must be fully accepted in order to soften its effects. Both countries are also aware that each's membership in its opposing alliance is in large part responsible for the continued regional and global stability. Both countries cannot afford to alienate themselves from the leaders of their respective alliances and consequently cannot pursue reunification. However, as both countries continue to improve relations (although a de facto reunification is too distant to be in sight) the situation will continue to provide a greater and greater challenge for bipolar control.⁶³

The last outcome of a NATO break-up to be explored is perhaps the most feasible (and least attractive to the Soviet Union). It is that of a politically or militarily unified Europe of which West Germany would be a part. This outcome is possible in that a dissolution of NATO might be

⁶³Hassner, Change in Security in Europe, Part I: The Background, p. 14.

the one impetus strong enough to motivate a union of the highly diverse and strongly national West European countries. Such a development would be highly undesirable to the Soviet Union. Although Western Europe would present a lesser deterrent than the Atlantic Alliance, it might include more nuclear powers (including the FRG); it might be more cohesive than NATO and consequently more impervious to Soviet influence.⁶⁴ Because of the dangers of collective control (if no West European leader emerged) such an alliance could be more unpredictable and dangerous than NATO.

In the current situation, with NATO intact, a stronger West European pillar to the Alliance is highly desirable but also highly unlikely. The existence of NATO and the U.S. nuclear guarantee make it difficult to produce the motivation needed for increased West European cooperation politically and militarily as well as the increased spending that such coordination and efforts toward greater defense independence would require. Additionally, the opposition has argued that such efforts would only increase East-West tensions by making the Warsaw Pact feel less secure. In the current period of renewed detente and arms control, such moves (if the argument for renewed

⁶⁴Richard Pipes, "Detente: Moscow's View," Soviet Strategy in Europe, ed. Richard Pipes (New York: Crane, Russak and Company, Inc., 1976), p. 23.

tensions is to be believed) would be highly unpopular in Western Europe.

This is not to say that West Europeans have made no attempts at political or military coordination. Such efforts have been highly visible in such organizations as the Western European Union (WEU), the Eurogroup and the EPC (European Political Cooperation). These organizations have not met with the level of success achieved in the EC in economic integration (which is hardly unqualified), but their achievements deserve mention.

The EPC was founded in 1970 by the EC members to help coordinate their respective foreign policies where possible. The organization seeks to promote mutual understanding and solidarity of action on important international problems. For example, the EPC allowed its members to reach an agreement for sanctions on Poland and to coordinate their efforts during the Falklands Crisis, both in 1982.

The Eurogroup was formed in 1968 to allow European Defense Ministers to share their views on various issues, including the European contribution to NATO, without the presence of the American Secretary of Defense. The group has made steady progress on some areas of arms cooperation and in dispatching reports (particularly to the U.S.) on European defense efforts.

The WEU served originally to monitor West German rearmament after World War II. This function has almost disappeared, but the WEU remains in existence as an option for the future of European defense. Both the Eurogroup and WEU have also attempted to assist in coordinating European arms production and procurement. Yet both have made little progress in light of the EC's inability to agree on a European industrial policy.⁶⁵

In addition to these efforts, current plans for a Franco-German brigade and a Franco-German Defense Council are noteworthy. However, these projects are still mainly symbolic.

In summary, while the Soviets will maintain as a long-term objective the severing of U.S. and NATO ties to the FRG, the possible outcomes of a short-term rupture of the Atlantic Alliance would appear to be too risky to be worthwhile. The new leadership in the Kremlin seems to be making efforts to regain the wider detente of the 1970's when its foreign policy successes were most spectacular. The decision to thaw US-Soviet relations (after a cooling in the wake of the INF deployments), including renewed arms control and summitry, will serve to improve the USSR's "peace-loving" image in the West and further enhance its political position by reconfirming its superpower status.

⁶⁵Stanley R. Sloan, NATO's Future: Toward a New Transatlantic Bargain (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1985), p. 187.

The Kremlin hopes to preserve the detente gains of the 1970's and resume the momentum of increasing its influence in the FRG and NATO to undercut that of the United States.⁶⁶

⁶⁶van Oudenaren, Soviet Policy Toward Western Europe, p. 112.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This paper has attempted to show how the Soviet Union seeks to expand its influence in the FRG and NATO through exploitation of West German interests in Ostpolitik, security from the East, and the FRG's sensitivities over its past. The well-established Soviet detente policies have allowed the Kremlin to capitalize on West German (and West European) interest in reduced East-West tensions as well as conflicting Eastern policies in the Western Alliance to achieve some significant successes in displacing U.S. influence and increasing its own in Western Europe.

These achievements can be divided into two areas. The first is the trend toward increasing West German (and West European) political immobility toward the East as a result of the West's goals--to preserve the system and process of detente and its perceived gains in security. This development is also enhanced by the intimidation factor inherent in the Soviet Union's preponderant military strength. This immobility promotes a weakening of the Alliance as the U.S. and Western Europe pursue divergent policies toward the East.

The second area of achievement is in the popularization of arms control in the West. As in the case of West German and West European interest in the economic and political

fruits of detente the interest in arms control has its roots in "Western" factors. These include the desire to wish away the threat by believing the Soviets "are just like us" and have no expansionist designs. Other factors include West German (and West European) anxiety over unpredictable U.S. leadership and the belief that Moscow needs to be reassured of the West's benign intentions. However, Soviet peace propaganda (particularly through the West European Peace Campaign) and intimidating rhetoric regarding nuclear weapons have played a big role in exploiting West European sensitivities to achieve the political success in the current Western views of arms control as a solution to the East-West military imbalance.

Although Soviet tactics have not succeeded in significantly undermining the cohesiveness of the Western Alliance (as was evident in the failure to halt the INF deployments), greater Soviet influence in NATO coupled with NATO disunity over Eastern policy and weakened U.S. leadership (and lower credibility in its security guarantee) are indeed cause for concern (and action). Three Western countermeasures aimed at mitigating the effects of Soviet policies will be proposed below.

First, the leadership in all NATO nations (but primarily in the U.S. and the FRG) must work to arrest the popularization of arms control by openly supporting the deployment and modernization of nuclear weapons and the maintenance of

East-West military balance as deterrents to Soviet aggression or coercion, and therefore as stabilizing political factors. As long as NATO governments, particularly conservative ones in Alliance leadership, continue to echo the Soviet line that it is weapons (particularly nuclear ones) that are destabilizing vice the intentions and behavior of their owners, no progress can be made in implementing effective political-military countermeasures to Soviet policies. If Western publics were made aware of the utility and benefits of nuclear weaponry (as war deterrents) just as they were apprised of their inherent dangers and dilemmas in the peace campaign, there would be a chance that the Western populace could learn to support more balanced policies vis a vis the Soviets rather than arms control for arms reduction's sake only.

Secondly, the U.S. must provide more responsible, consistent leadership for the Atlantic Alliance. The U.S. system of government makes this difficult, but not impossible, as conservative administrations turn over to liberal ones with the predictable (and sometimes unpredictable) changes in foreign policy. Soviet hegemonic goals have not changed appreciably since the revolution and their attainment is often inadvertently supported by an inconsistent American implementation of traditional containment doctrine. President Reagan's policy reversals have been a startlingly vivid example of this inconsistency

in Alliance leadership which so greatly weakens NATO and its ability to counter Soviet policies. Not only has President Reagan failed to consult with NATO allies before important summits and policy decisions, but he has flouted accepted NATO policy (by agreeing, in principle, to eliminate all long range INF in Western Europe at the 1985 Reykjavik Summit) and undermining the U.S. (and NATO) strategic doctrine of Flexible Response by signing a treaty to eliminate an entire class of weapons (long and short range INF). The political reversal made in Reagan's second term by choosing to pursue arms control rather than an East-West military balance may shortly result in the removal of a significant portion of the NATO nuclear deterrent from Western Europe.

Lastly, both the U.S. and the FRG must make stronger efforts at accommodation of one another's interests in order to present a more unified front to the East. The U.S. must recognize West Germany's legitimate long term aspirations in the East, and should help support the FRG in attaining them without undermining NATO unity and security. At the same time the FRG should try to appreciate the U.S. position in being ultimately responsible for challenging Soviet expansionism.⁶⁷ Since their security objectives converge in

⁶⁷John Van Oudenaren, "US-West German Relations and the Soviet Problem," The Soviet Problem in American-German Relations, ed. by Uwe Nerlich and James A. Thomson (New York: Crane, Russak and Company, Inc., 1985), p. 118.

NATO the two nations who lead the Alliance cannot allow their differences in means of policy pursuit to continue to erode the security of the Western Alliance and endanger the future of Western democracy.

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